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SUBJECT: COTE D'IVOIRE: JULY 24, 2008 UN SECURITY COUNCIL
CONSULTATIONS

¶1. (U) The Security Council will hold consultations on Cote d'Ivoire on July 24, 2008. USUN may draw on the talking points in paragraph 2.

¶2. Begin points:

-- I would like to thank Ambassador Choi for his briefing.

-- We congratulate the parties on their continuing efforts to fulfill their obligations under the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, and again thank the Facilitator, President Compaore, for his dedication to the peace process.

-- The U.S. welcomes the progress made to date in preparing for the November 30 elections. These elections are an opportunity to reestablish trust among all parties in Cote d'Ivoire. They must exemplify the importance to the country's future stability and prosperity of opening the political process and economic opportunity to all Ivoirians.

-- We hope that it will be possible to accelerate the technical preparations to ensure that the elections are conducted as planned. We fully support the role that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General will play in certifying that the elections are free, open, fair and transparent.

-- We hope that there will be more rapid progress on disarmament and demobilization of combatants. This is critical in guaranteeing a secure environment throughout the country. It is a vital step in rebuilding an inclusive, democratic security sector.

-- The U.S. is also concerned about the low rate of surrender of weapons, and the very possibly connected rise in crime. We urge the leadership of the Defense and Security Forces of Cote d'Ivoire and of the Forces Nouvelles to sign the memorandum of understanding on the responsibility of the impartial forces to supervise storage of weapons that have been surrendered.

-- As the Secretary-General noted in his report, disarmament and dismantling of militia groups is a key element in the restoration of security. We urge militia leaders to cooperate with the Government in bringing this about.

-- We look forward to continuing progress in establishing national administration throughout the country and on building the national civic service.

-- The United States appreciates the candor and concern shown in the report's discussion of the serious problem of the lack of impunity for sexual violence against women. We

applaud and support UNOCI's efforts to address this issue, and to promote and protect human rights in Cote d'Ivoire, in particular the rights of women and children. We note in particular the training programs both for mission personnel and for those working in the Ivorian legal and judicial systems.

-- We also welcome the steps the mission is taking to underscore the UN's zero-tolerance policy for sexual misconduct by its personnel. The U.S. will be very interested in the results of the investigations into allegations of such misconduct by UNOCI peacekeepers.

-- In conclusion, the U.S. supports the renewal of UNOCI's current mandate and strength, and looks forward to the Secretary-General's recommendations in his next report on a drawdown plan.

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End points.
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